

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A sports shaft comprising:  
an elongated body comprising opposed first and second major side surfaces  
spacing apart opposed first and second minor side surfaces,  
each said major surface having two lateral major edges disposed along the length  
of said elongated body,  
each said minor surface having two lateral minor edges disposed along the length  
of the elongated body,  
each said major edge abutting an adjacent minor edge along its entire length  
forming four angles along the longitudinal periphery of said body,  
at least one of said angles comprising a longitudinally disposed groove therein,  
said groove comprising a first face disposed adjacent said major surface and a second face  
disposed adjacent said minor surface, said first and second faces ~~each having a margin disposed~~  
~~distally from said major and minor surfaces, said margins abutting~~ intersecting each other for the  
length of the groove,  
~~said first face and said second face defining a cavity,~~  
each groove said cavity being filled with an elastomeric material with the  
elastomeric material being present only within a volume bounded by said first face, by said  
second face, by a first plane projecting from and being parallel to said major surface and by a  
second plane projecting from and being parallel to said minor surface.
2. (Original) The sports shaft of claim 1 wherein said elastomeric material is selected  
from a group comprising: thermoset elastomeric urethane, thermoplastic polyurethane thermoset  
elastomer dicyclopentadiene, thermoplastic elastomer, thermoplastic urethane, silicone, rubber,  
polyisoprene, polybutadiene, polyisobutylene and latex.
3. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim 2-1 wherein said first face is  
disposed substantially perpendicularly to said major surface.

4. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein said second face is disposed substantially perpendicularly to said minor surface.

5. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein said first and said second faces are both disposed perpendicularly to said major surface and said minor surface.

6. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~3-to-5~~ wherein said elastomeric material fills ~~a~~ the volume bounded by said first face, by said second face, by a first plane projecting from and being parallel to said major surface and by a second plane projecting from and being parallel to said minor surface.

7. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein the groove is a first groove, the at least one said angle comprises a second groove ~~two~~ separate and spaced apart from the first grooves, the second ~~each~~ said groove being comprising a cavity filled with elastomeric material.

8. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim 7 wherein the at least one of said angles include at least two or more of said angles ~~each comprise a groove therein, said groove comprising a cavity filled with elastomeric material.~~

9. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein said groove is disposed along only a longitudinal portion of said angle.

10. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein said elastomeric material is shaped such that its exterior shape is undulating.

11. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein said first face and said second face are coplanar.

12. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein said first face and said second face are the same size.

13. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein said elastomeric material fills a volume which is bounded by said first face, by said second face and by the segment of an arc, said segment of an arc beginning at the intersection of said first face and said major surface and ending at the intersection of said second face and said minor surface.

14. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-13~~ wherein said segment of an arc begins at either one of said minor surface adjacent said second face or at said major surface adjacent said first face.

15. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-13~~ wherein said segment of an arc begins on said major surface adjacent said first face and ends on said minor surface adjacent said second face.

16. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein at least one of said first and second faces comprises at least one depression therein.

17. (Original) The sports shaft of claim 16 wherein said at least one depression is disposed longitudinally to the length of said groove.

18. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~17-16~~ wherein said depression is disposed perpendicularly to the length of said groove.

19. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~2-1~~ wherein at least one of said first and second faces comprises at least one raised portion thereon.

20. (Original) The sports shaft of claim 19 wherein said at least one raised portion is disposed longitudinally to the length of said groove.

21. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~20-19~~ wherein said raised portion is disposed perpendicularly to the length of said groove.

22. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim 2-1 wherein said shaft is a hockey shaft.

23. (Currently Amended) A sports shaft comprising:  
an elongated body comprising opposed first and second major wall components spacing apart opposed first and second minor wall components,

said first major wall component comprising a first shelf component adjacent said first major wall component, said first shelf component projecting from said first major wall component towards said second major wall component, said first shelf component having a first distal end,

said first minor wall component comprising a second shelf component adjacent said first ~~major-minor~~ wall component, said second shelf component projecting from said first minor wall component towards said second minor wall component, said second shelf component having a second distal end,

wherein said first and second distal ends meet forming a groove on the outside of said elongated body, said groove being filled with an elongated bumper made of an elastomeric material and located only within a volume bounded by said first shelf component, by said second shelf component, by a first plane projecting from and being parallel to said major wall component and by a second plane projecting from and being parallel to said minor wall component.

24. (Original) The sports shaft of claim 23 wherein said elastomeric material is selected from a group comprising: thermoset elastomeric urethane, thermoplastic polyurethane, thermoset elastomer dicyclopentadiene, thermoplastic elastomer, thermoplastic urethane, silicone, rubber, polyisoprene, polybutadiene, polyisobutylene and latex.

25. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim 24-23 wherein said first ~~face-shelf~~ component is disposed substantially perpendicularly to said major ~~surface wall~~ component.

26. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein said second ~~face~~ shelf component is disposed substantially perpendicularly to said minor wall component~~surface~~.

27. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein said first and said second shelf components~~faces~~ are both disposed perpendicularly to said major wall component~~surface~~ and said minor wall component~~surface~~.

28. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-to-27~~23 wherein said elastomeric material fills ~~a-the~~ volume bounded by said first shelf component~~face~~, by said second shelf component~~face~~, by a first plane projecting from and being parallel to said major wall component~~surface~~ and by a second plane projecting from and being parallel to said minor wall component~~surface~~.

29. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein the groove is a first groove, the shaft further comprising a second groove~~at least one said angle comprises two separate and spaced apart from the first grooves, each said groove comprising a cavity and filled with a second bumper made of the elastomeric material.~~

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein said groove is disposed along only a longitudinal portion of said ~~angle~~elongated body.

32. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein ~~said elastomeric material~~each bumper is shaped such that its exterior shape is undulating.

33. (Cancelled)

34. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein said first ~~face~~shelf component and said second shelf component~~face~~ are the same size.

35. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein said elastomeric material fills a volume which is bounded by said first ~~shelf component~~~~face~~, by said second ~~shelf component~~~~face~~—and by the segment of an arc, said segment of an arc beginning at the intersection of said first ~~shelf component~~~~face~~ and said major wall ~~components~~~~surface~~ and ending at the intersection of said second ~~shelf component~~~~face~~ and said minor ~~wall components~~~~surface~~.

36. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-35~~ wherein said segment of an arc begins at either one of said minor ~~wall components~~~~surface~~ adjacent said second ~~shelf component~~~~face~~ or at said major ~~wall components~~~~surface~~ adjacent said first ~~shelf component~~~~face~~.

37. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-35~~ wherein said segment of an arc begins on said major ~~wall components~~~~surface~~ adjacent said first ~~shelf component~~~~face~~ and ends on said minor ~~wall components~~~~surface~~ adjacent said second ~~shelf component~~~~face~~.

38. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein at least one of said first and second ~~shelf components~~~~faces~~ comprises at least one depression therein.

39. (Original) The sports shaft of claim 38 wherein said at least one depression is disposed longitudinally to the length of said groove.

40. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~39-38~~ wherein said depression is disposed perpendicularly to the length of said groove.

41. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24-23~~ wherein at least one of said first and second ~~shelf components~~~~faces~~ comprises at least one raised portion thereon.

42. (Original) The sports shaft of claim 41 wherein said at least one raised portion is disposed longitudinally to the length of said groove.

43. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~42-41~~ wherein said raised portion is disposed perpendicularly to the length of said groove.

44. (Currently Amended) The sports shaft of claim ~~24~~23 wherein said shaft is a hockey shaft.

~~45-49.~~(Cancelled)

50. (Currently Amended) A method of fabricating a sports shaft comprising the steps of:

- placing a

- preformed sports shaft comprising an elongated body comprising opposed first and second major side surfaces spaced apart opposed first and second minor side surfaces, each said major surface having two lateral major edges disposed along the length of said elongated body, each said minor surface having two lateral minor edges disposed along the length of said elongated body, each said major edge abutting an adjacent minor edge along its entire length forming four angles along the longitudinal periphery of said body, at least one of said angles comprising a longitudinally disposed groove therein, said groove comprising a first face disposed adjacent said major surface and a second face disposed adjacent said minor surface, said first and second faces each ~~having a margin disposed distally from said major and minor surfaces, said margins abutting~~intersecting each other for the length of the groove, ~~said first face and said second face defining a cavity,~~

- into a first mold section,

- closing a second mold section around said preformed sports shaft,

- injecting an elastomeric material into the closed mold such that the ~~cavity~~groove becomes filled with elastomeric material while containing the elastomeric material within a volume bounded by said first face, by said second face, by a first plane projecting from and being parallel to said major surface and by a second plane projecting from and being parallel to said minor surface, and

- removing said sports shaft from said mold.

51. (Original) The method of claim 50 wherein said elastomeric material is selected from a group comprising: thermoset elastomeric urethane, thermoplastic polyurethane, thermoset

elastomer dicyclopentadiene, thermoplastic elastomer, thermoplastic urethane, silicone, rubber, polyisoprene, polybutadiene, polyisobutylene and latex.

52. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~51-50~~ wherein ~~said injection of said further comprising curing the injected~~ elastomeric material ~~can be cured at a temperatures between of from~~ room temperature ~~up to and~~ 290°F.

53. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~52-50~~ wherein the elastomeric material ~~can be~~ injected into the mold at a pressure of from 20 to 40 pounds per square inch.